# First Night in Hindu Marriage

First night is the creation of environment to impress upon the bride about the non-effect of socio-sexual restrictive values and socio-sexual conditionings within the privacy of her marriage and so also to grant allowance to the bride-groom to enjoy the sex within the privacy of his marriage. The above explanation about the first-night can be understood only when we analyse the need for such function.

First of all the marriage gives permit to the man and woman to enjoy sex within their marriage so long their marriage continues; as such what is the need for arranging such an event, viz. first-night (popularly known as Suhag-Raat), that too making such a ceremonious arrangements; we should first study the socio-restrictive values and conditionings in the sexual interactions.

When a person thinks about, "first night' or 'Suhag-Raat', otherwise called 'wedding night', it really gives the person a sort of 'kick', because that will be the first time, generally, a man's, or woman's, personal sexual desire is

allowed to overtake the socio-sexual restrictive values and the ambitious desire is allowed to be fulfilled for the first time then only. Moreover, the bride and bridegroom realise that the purpose of the gender role they were playing in the society hitherto is fulfilled during that night.

What is first night or 'Suhag-Raat'? First night is an event celebrated as a function wherein the just married couple are allowed, with celebrity, to enjoy sex in privacy. Here, privacy is created for them, the couple's cultural group makes them to enter into the created privacy and their entering into privacy is celebrated as a part of wedding, or in other words, as an epilogue of the wedding function; thus notifying the purpose of the marriage having fulfilled.

After all, all our social interactions are influenced by social values and especially the sexual interactions are controlled by the socio-sexual values. The tendency of the social values are to impart the values into the personal values of the individuals as such the important values of the society, viz. sexual values play prominent role in moulding one's personal values about sex. Therefore, when the social values have got very strong influence over the personal values of an individual with regard to sex, then any changes, or modifications, to be done in the personal sexual values of a n individual at certain stage, or age, is carried out by imparting the restrictive values, or conditionally allowing freely, though social functions.

When a girl is brought-up with a lot of socio-sexual restrictive values and social-conditionings in sex, it will be very difficult for her to compromise with the changed situation wherein she has to interact sexually, that too, with the opposite sex. Moreover, sex is viewed in the perspective of personal sexual values by man and in the perspective of socio-sexual values by woman; and every woman is conditioned to enjoy, or give, sex under security only and the security is her marriage.

The social values are so strong on the women in any society that the socio-sexual restrictive values will not allow the sexual desires of a girl to overtake them. Therefore when a necessity has arisen to modify such

restrictive values so as to allow her to enjoy, or give, sex within the prescribed framework, a social function called, "first night" is celebrated. Moreover apart from imparting the idea that the restrictive socio-sexual values are withdrawn and such values will not interfere within their married privacy it is pertinent to impart the important factors of marriage. That is the reason why wedding is deemed to have been completed with the last rite of their sexual union; that imparts the minds of the couple with the important factor: that is marriage is a unit and the couple have to pull it on mutual care.

In Indian culture, it is quite interesting to watch the face of a bride just before entering the first-night room. So far she is restricted in her interactions with male members other than that of close relatives and barred to be alone with any male member, in privacy, except with her father, or sometimes brother. Moreover, she is not allowed to express any sort of sexual feelings and kept away from sex. Now imagine the psychological feelings in the minds of the bride. When her sexual desire overtakes the restrictive values, the resultant factor is very much apparent on the bride's face showing the happy reddishness. The same apparent change can be seen during the interaction in the first night room.

When a woman's sexual interactions are dictated by social values and unless the society gives permission, the girl will not be able to enjoy the sex on account of conditionings of her mind through socio-sexual values. Therefore, through first night function, the girl is made to understand that her social group accepts her right to enjoy sex with her specific partner.

Environments, health and motivating factors are taken into consideration in arranging the first night room. As far the environment is concerned, 'intricate and intimate relationship between two human beings' that concentrate must in the sexual affair, hence the environment should be favourable for such concentration but, atlas should be in such a way not to distract the attention or be a hurdle for any sexual feelings. In fact, cleanliness, neatness and cover-ups are added motivational factors for sex. The maximum cleanliness and neatness of a bedroom of their level of any couple will be in their first night-room and will have new things.

Moreover, as per tradition, as the sexual pleasure in the first night is supposed to be new feeling for the both, these 'new' things in the first night will give added 'kick' for the both.

We have seen above that first night is to make the couple to understand that enjoyment of sex in privacy within their marriage is their absolute right and also to impress upon the couple that none of the others, however close they may be, or the society, can poke nose in their sexual affair except in the case of one partner taking undue advantage of the right beyond repair. Once society withdraws its sexual values in the first night, then the honeymoon makes them to formulate their own sexual values. The purpose of first night and honey-moon is to create different environments; in the former, it is to make them to understand their right and realize the withdrawal of socio-sexual values, and in the later, it is to formulate their own sexual values and modes. Basically, marriage is fusing the complimentary for mutual care and responsibility, wherein the responsibility means responsibility of keeping their marriage happy and bringing up their children in a better way, and care is, in totality, including sex, for satisfaction, satiation, better health and happiness. Thus, they can formulate during honeymoon by evaluating their own socio-sexual values, personal sexual values and understood biological and psychological aspects of sex. Such formulation for enjoyment of both is the basic concept of formulating their family-unit's policies, at a later stage in marriage.

The arrangements in the first night room are meant to teach couple:

(1) their right for sexuality;

(2) infrastructure for sexual act;

(3) other basic needs having fulfilled before the start;

(4) no negative emotion;

(5) privacy and good environment for concentration.

Good health means no ill health so as to distract the sexual attention and concentration. Middle of menstrual cycle is a good cyclic period for woman and longer gap from the last ejaculation, according to his age and potentiality is good for man. This is the reason why generally middle of menstrual period is fixed for first night, or otherwise in modern times, the woman is asked to take pill during the current cycle. The couple is asked to finish off their natural calls before their entry into the room when there is no attached toilet (as common in lower middle class Indian family) in the first night room, so that the natural calls should neither be hurdle for concentration nor should be embarrassing to come out during the act. Moreover, no concentration, or perception, of sexual feelings is possible when a person is hungry and thirst. Therefore in the Indian culture some eatables and drinks are provided in the room. Usually, negative emotion may not prevail in the first night as it is being celebrated and as the couple enters with lot of expectations. Only when the expectations do not turn out to be reality at least to a minimum level, then only the negative emotion steps in. In order to avoid such negative emotion, dominating and initiative factors are boosted in mind of bridegroom and adjustability factor is thrust in the bride's mind by their respective peer group. Generally certain elders and the peer group, especially of the bride, will all enter in the room and come out all together leaving the couple alone in the room closing the door, thereby substantiating the privacy being the fundamental right, and necessity, of the newly married couple.

As already seen the good environment is created by creating the maximum neatness and cleanliness in the room, so that perception and concentration will be easier for the both. Before going into motivational factors, it is interesting to note that first night is arranged only in the night so as to make them to understand that after strenuous physical and mental exercises during sexual act both their mind and body require relaxation.

As the sexual interaction happens to be new experience, the five senses should first be motivated to receive and send the pleasurable feelings and

thereafter enable them to switchover to sexual feelings. Hence, the arrangements in the first night room are done in such direction where, attractive and new cover-ups and dresses will attract the eyes and create pleasure of viewing; the aroma of incense sticks will create sensual fragrant atmosphere in the room; the delicious eatable will make the taste a pleasure feeling; the voice of one partner will have instigative effect on the other partner; and the new softness of the bed will have thrilling instigation all over the body.

In the first night, the man is to take the initiative for further sexual proceedings for which sexual feelings should first be generated in him. Therefore, as per Indian cultures, the first act in the room, as per norms, will be the bride offering milk, kept in the tumbler for this purpose to the bridegroom. The woman and privacy would already have created a 'kick' in him and added to that the offer of milk will make his sub-conscious, with the background of Oedipus Complex, to transform the milk to its origin, breast, and, being the sexual symbol, translates it to sex. By which transforming concept, the sexual drive is created in him to take initiative in sex. Further it is a normal custom for the man to "give" a part of milk, after drinking the first part, to his wife to drink and she has to take it. This act indicates the following important aspects: first the woman gives the milk to her partner and after enjoying himself he gives the milk to her thereby indicating that first the woman gives sexual pleasure to her man and thereafter the man starts giving her pleasure through interactions. Secondly, sharing being the common ingredient for the both in sex, adjustability pertains to woman in sex; whereas milk is shared by the both, the woman adjusts with the remaining quantity given by him; moreover it indicates the dominance of male over female.

As the sexual act being strenuous exercise, to compensate the energy lost, fruits are usually provided in the room. Also as the act created the heat in the body due to lot of friction, milk is provided to the both to cool the body; that is one of reasons for asking both the couple to take oil bath on the next day to cool the body. Now that having gone through the reason

for such arrangements in the room, now we will see the important points for the couple to deal with in their mutual interactions during the night.

At the outset, it is pertinent for the both to have the idea of difference in perspective of sex and physiological differences between man and woman. Afterwards they can exchange their ideas; however starting exploring each other's personal values, concept and perspective of sex, and pleasure giving spots can better be postponed to honeymoon.

Anyhow, general exploration during the sexual interaction is a must in the first night. The following points should always be kept in their mind in their attitude during their first-night: Selfishness, in marriage is the bitterest enemy of marriage and so also for sexuality in marriage. Fundamental concept of sex in marriage is mutuality and purpose is satiation. Man's is to take initiative with leadership but without selfishness and egoism while enjoying itself, to create the sensual feeling in her and make her to involve in the enjoyment for the both; woman's is to leave socio-sexual values and inhibitions and to barter the sex for happiness. It is an opportunity to establish free communication. Respecting the other's sentiments and values, thereby creating an impression of security of one of the main factors for successful marriage, i.e. respect.

Fusing the complementary for compatibility is the basic necessity of marriage and this is first achieved on physical dimension through sex and on the basis of successful sexual relationship established in the early stage of marriage the necessity can be fulfilled, in the long run, on psychological dimension also with commitment and will. Love is the base for happy marriage wherein love is to make and maintain the other happy; at any cost, this should be the first impression to be created in the first night. Love, in marriage, is sentimentally craving for to be together with, emotionally caring for, and sensually urging for fusing with the partner.

Action to satisfaction is the golden principle of sex in marriage. The difference in gender between man and woman is on account of physiologically muscle and fat; psychologically materialistic assessment

and sentimentally emotional impressions and biologically the difference in hormones. The real villains in marriage are selfishness, egoism and helplessness between them. Commitment to the principles of marriage and responsibility of maintaining happiness in marriage should first be resolved in the first night and the details should be worked out to achieve this goal of commitment and responsibilityduring their honeymoon.

Now coming to the approach in the first night, first of all, the first night should never be taken as an opportunity to fulfil the long suppressed desires, rather it is an introductory session for sex in marriage and it is very important to create the impression of compatibility. Marriage is adjustment of complementary for mutuality and sex is enjoyment of complementary for mutuality. The approach of the groom, in the first night should be gentle with patience. Usually the man's approach in sex is of exploration, adventurous and peeling off. Every move of man in the first night should be with her direct or indirect, consent at the same time making her also to involve in the enjoyment. As far the bride is concerned, her approach should be of opening up, adjustability for his moves and co-operating for his actions; however his accessibility to hers should not be easier and at the end of the process, winning is his satisfaction and giving in is her enjoyment; in this particular aspect the relationship between them will be of hunter and hunted. The prevailing emotions during the night will usually be anxiety and tension, and craving passion and surging urge. Physiology, psychology and sociology are the three main contributing subjects in sex; physiologically the physical alertness, psychologically the perception of difference in gender and sociologically the unusualness will be at peak in the first night and these three can be fully made use of for sexual enjoyment. However these three will be developed and improved for total satisfaction and satiation during honeymoon and thereafter. Even though the total mutual sexual interaction of the both may, or may not, prevail during the first night, every sexual action should be enjoyable to the both. In the first night, each partner, through sex, should impress the security of care in the mind of the other and this will evolve the major success of first night. Both should fully make use of all the five senses, with concentration and

perception of difference in gender, and enjoy the feelings being sexual. Perception of difference in gender and concentration on sexual feelings are the important chapters to be learnt in the first night.

Now coming to interactions during the first night, the interactions throughout the night must be the expression of love and compatibility and satiation can be taken care of thereafter. The modes of expression of affection by the person's close during the person's early stages of life are the same no also to express the love but, the only difference perceives the difference in gender consciously. In the first night, the difference in gender plays dominant role on the physical dimension and the unusualness will be at peak on account of viewing and interacting with what was not exposed so far and enjoyment of what was denied hitherto. Provided the marriage is on account of liking each other, least other motivational factors are required rather one can smell the surging urge in the atmosphere of the first night. Even though the unusualness, alertness and perception are at peak, better not to approach with high expectations rather the best course is to approach with interactions for love. The approach with high expectation for satiation may, or may not, yield result of satisfaction to the level of expectation of either, or both; otherwise it may boomerang with psychological problems for either, or both. As a good sexual relationship is yet to be established, it is not proper to land in any sexual problem at this stage which, because of lack of free communication and understanding, may create inferiority complex, frustration and disgust which, in turn, is like a drop of poison in the milk of happy sexual relationship. As such, the whole motto in the first night should be to ward off socio-sexual restrictive values, anxiety and tension out of their privacy and in the process of expression of love, to establish free communication, understanding, adjustability and adoptability. Just warding off the evil and bringing in the good is the limit of first night but, whereas making use of these good for creating strong bondage between them is the motto of honeymoon.

In fact there is no limit to what extent the sexual act can precede with first night provided both agree for the same; however it will be very difficult

for the man, at the outset, to understand the intention of his partner. Only his experience, in the course of further sessions, will enable him to grasp her real intention on account of her non-verbal reactions. One of the reasons for honeymoon is to gain this experience. Therefore it is preferable to limit the interaction with warmth-sexual feeling so as to create positive impressions of trust and security. Of course sex was implicit for the both hitherto and from the first night, it becomes explicit between them; even then, the man can go for exploration in the first night, and can postpone his adventure in sex to his honeymoon, that too after establishing understanding between them. In the first night, the man enters with dynamism and woman enters with total cover-up; as such restrain for man and opening up for woman match well for the occasion. One should understand that a woman's cover-up is on account of strong domination of socio-sexual values over her personal sexual feelings and desire. The approach (with regard to intention, initiative and action) of man and woman, in sex will be different on different planes and after warding off socio-sexual values by creating confidence and trust both will be on the same plane except for their biological difference.

When one of main purposes of first night being to generate and enjoy sexual feelings, it is important for them, especially for him, to understand that the sexual feeling, in the present context, is for man on account of actions but whereas for woman on account of interactions; wherein action is independent and interaction is dependent. The interactions in the conjugal life have got its own unique language, which if not picked up properly and reacted aptly will print its own impressions in the sub-conscious. Moreover, once the action, or interaction, starts the man starts the man starts enjoying sex whereas, for woman, the interactions will create pleasure and later on she begins to enjoy sex; this difference in stages should be adjusted between themselves on understanding so as, ultimately, both to have satisfaction, or satiation as the case may be, unless there is an understanding otherwise.

A woman enters into first night room with anxiety, tension and fear, i.e. a bundle of emotions. Her aptitude and role will be on par with her socio-

sexual values, her expectation is according to her won personal sexual values and her approach is in accordance with the parameters of socio-sexual values. The clash between her desire and built-in sexual restrictive values will be at peak. The woman in the first night will be undergoing a war within herself: one side being the strong and dominating socio-sexual values and the other side being the sexual drive on account of biological and psychological factors and her on personal sexual values, and the resultant yield will be high emotion viz., Anxiety, tension, and fear. As she has been brought up with restrictive values as impressed factors; any attitude and approach of her man will create the first and strong impressions and woman, in general, because of the above-mentioned reason, are carried away by impressions rather than assessments. Without proper confidence and security she may not go for opening-up. Because of having brought up in the environment of such socio-cultural values, she may not communicate her intentions till the trust is formed in her. Her drive starts winning the battle once she gets more and more confidence of her freedom from socio-sexual values and security for the consequence, and her liking for and trust on her partner grows stronger and stronger; as women, generally, go by impressions, this result can be achieved by using the unique language of interaction to rub-off prints in her sub-conscious and to imprint the new factors of happy married life. Sex is a unique field wherein except the difference in gender, no other difference comes, or influences, in the field once the interaction starts with sexual drive in both.

Now we will try to study about the modern couple who is educated and self-reliant. The educated and self-reliant women will have a little more knowledge of sex and have better thinking and analyzing capacity which, in turn, make them to establish communication more freely and distinguish the limits and influence of social values inside and outside marriage, thereby making them to enjoy still in a better way that too at the earliest in the first-night.

Before, stepping into the epilogue of this article we will try to see the drawbacks in the present day first nights. Even though good care is taken

to enable them to enjoy, the society has failed to educate the couple about the sex, which is going to become their exclusive right, by which they can enjoy and encash the same for their happy married life. Moreover, when the society is keen of cleanliness in the room, they have forgotten to bring a custom of making the young couple to enter the room clean, i.e. immediately after taking bath so that the bad body odour, especially after day-long strenuous marriage ceremony, should not affect the program; and moreover it creates a very good habit of mating with clean body.

Coming to the epilogue, we understand that selfishness, egoism and creating helplessness (except for fun with understanding) are the deadliest enemies for happiness in sex and marriage. Secondly the socio-sexual values are to be driven off from the first night room. Cautious approach with patience for the bridegroom and opening-up with adjustability and co-operation for bride are very vital in the first night. Binding the couple as a unit outside the purview of socio-sexual values being the purpose of first night, expression of love through sex and confirming the security of care and satisfaction are the aim of the first-night. As a passing remark, wherein the security of satisfaction is to be created during first night, security of satiation is to be created in the honeymoon. The bride understanding the man's nature and the groom understanding the woman's nature are vital and adjusting to each other's nature, exploiting the sexuality enjoyable feelings by the both to the maximum extent is the wisest thing in the night and better not to cross enjoyment stage in the first night unless and otherwise both agree for further proceedings.

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